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THE CAPITOL

AT

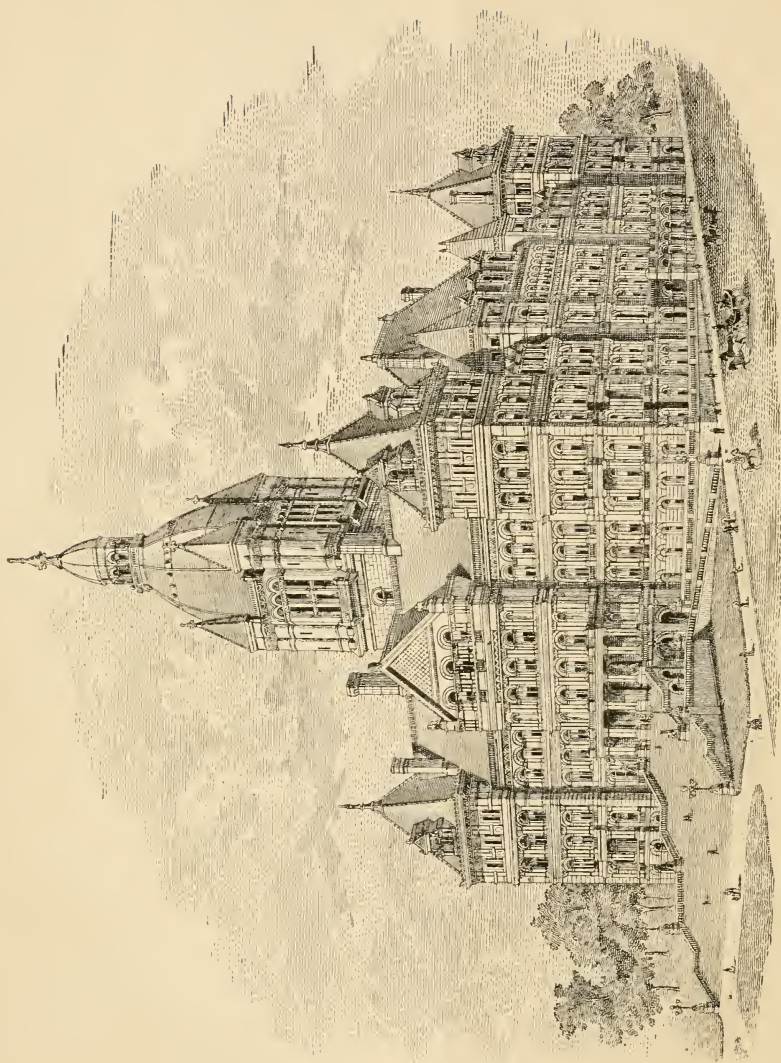
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THE CAPITOL AT ALBANY.

THE great structure which towers majestically from the brow of the hill overlooking the Hudson at Albany, needs no *cicerone* to announce its name, no guide book to designate its object. Its fame as the greatest and grandest legislative building of modern times is widely spread ; and from far and near, come thousands annually, to view its grandeur of design, its beauty of ornamentation ; and, like the queen of Sheba, after her call upon King Solomon, they go home, declaring that the one-half had not been told them. The foresight, which makes possible an adequate comprehension of the needs, a century hence, of a state like this, is of no common order ; and it is no wonder that ideas and plans based upon such prescience, appear to many, wild and extravagant. It is this unfortunate but not unnatural shortsightedness, that has given birth to much of the opposition which the building of the Capitol encountered. In time, all will agree that it is none too grand, none too beautiful, and none too costly for the chief edifice of the grandest, the proudest, the most prosperous and the most progressive state in the American Union. But to have started with the proposition that it was to cost fifteen or twenty millions would have been hopeless. It has taken years to educate the public up to the idea of what is only sufficient in this matter, and it is an actual fact that some have not reached that stage of advancement yet.

History.

The old Capitol (built in 1806-8) at an expense of \$110,685.42, had been found wholly inadequate, and there was much discussion about a new legislative building and where it should be erected. New York city had long coveted the Capitol, but the central and western portions of the state, while not altogether satisfied with having it where it is, were still more averse to seeing it moved down the river. The consequence was, it remained at Albany, which, after all, is the most convenient, and, so far as population is concerned, the most central of any eligible point that can be named. The legislature has met here continuously since 1797 ; in the Stadt Huis, corner of Broadway and Hudson avenue first, and afterward in the old Capitol, which stood till 1883 on a site in front of the present building.

THE FIRST DEFINITE ACTION taken by the legislature on the subject of a new Capitol was April 24, 1863, when Senator James A. Bell, from the committee on public buildings, offered a resolution (which was adopted)

that the trustees of the Capitol and the chairman of the committee on public buildings be authorized to procure suitable plans for a new Capitol, and report to the next legislature. They did so, recommending the plans submitted by Fuller & Jones. Early in 1865, a committee was appointed by the senate to ascertain by correspondence with various municipalities on what terms the necessary ground and buildings could be obtained. New York showed her desire for the honor, by offering a site on the Battery, or at City Hall Park, or in Tompkins Square, or in Central Park, or in any public place, and also proposed to erect all the necessary buildings free of expense to the state; and, in addition, build an executive mansion on Fifth avenue, opposite Central Park. Yonkers, Saratoga, Athens, Whitestown, Argyle and Sing Sing made liberal offers; Buffalo, Oswego and Ithaca declined to entertain the proposition, as did Sandy Hill. "If," wrote the worthy president of that virtuous village, "the time has come when our Capitol is to go to the highest bidder, like most everything that has any connection with our present legislature, then I would frankly say that our people are not the ones to offer large bribes or inducements for the purpose of building up their place or people to the detriment and inconvenience of all the rest of the people of the state."

The first committee (appointed April 24, 1863) had suggested in their propositions for plans that they should be made with reference to the square about the old building as the site for the new one. The city of Albany now offered to convey to the state the lot adjoining, occupied by the Congress Hall block, or any other lands in the city required for the purpose.

On the 1st of May, 1865, an act was passed (chapter 648) authorizing the erection of a new Capitol, whenever the city of Albany should deed over the land proposed, providing for the appointment of three commissioners, and appropriating \$10,000 for the commencement and prosecution of the work. On the 14th of April, 1866, the city having made good its offer, at an expense of \$190,000, an act was passed ratifying and confirming the location of the Capitol, and May 3d of the same year, Hamilton Harris, John V. L. Pruyn, of Albany, and O. B. Latham, of Seneca Falls, were appointed New Capitol commissioners. On the 22d of April, 1867, an act was passed appropriating \$250,000 for the new Capitol, but providing that no part should be expended until a plan had been agreed upon not to cost, when completed, more than four millions. The plan submitted by Thomas Fuller was adopted, and he was appointed architect, and William J. McAlpine consulting engineer.

WORK BEGUN.—On the 9th of December, 1867, the excavating was begun on the corner of Hawk and State streets, by John Bridgford, who had under him 100 men.

On the 19th of May, 1868, an act was passed appropriating an additional \$250,000, and adding to the commission Messrs. James S. Thayer, Alonzo B. Cornell, William A. Rice, James Terwilliger and John T. Hudson. The commission were also authorized to take as additional land one-half the block adjoining Congress Hall block on the west, and to change the plans at their discretion, with this proviso: That if they were

so changed that the building would cost more than four millions, the commissioners were not to proceed to construction till such plans were approved by the legislature. Meantime work had been delayed for a year in order that the additional lands might be secured. On the 2d of October, 1868, the commissioners having come to the conclusion that preparing the land was not included in the term "construction," the demolition of houses on State, Washington, Spring and Hawk streets was begun, and, in December following, 400 men and 200 teams were employed carrying the earth that had been excavated and depositing it down the bank at the corner of Swan and Canal streets. The enlarged plans, prepared by Fuller & Laver, were duly reported to the legislature, and approved by act of May 10, 1869.

THE FOUNDATION.—The first stone in the foundation was laid July 7, 1869, by John V. L. Pruyn. This foundation, although, of course, out of sight, and scarcely thought of by the ordinary visitor, is a wonder in itself. In the first place, excavations were made to an average depth of 15 43-100 feet below the surface. Then a bed of concrete, 4 feet thick, was laid, constituting a stone floor which will grow harder and harder as time rolls on. The sub-basement extends down 19 feet 4 inches, and contains 735,000 cubic feet of stone, while the brick walls, from 32 inches to 5 feet thick, contain between ten and eleven million bricks. The foundation of the main tower is 110 feet square at the base, tapering to 70 feet square at the basement floor. In this sub-basement are no less than 144 different apartments, occupied in part by the heating, ventilating and electric lighting apparatus. The boilers were formerly here but they have been removed to a boiler house on Lafayette street, one block north and connected with the Capitol by an underground conduit six feet high.

THE CORNER STONE was laid with great ceremony by the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons on the 24th of June, 1871. The exercises took place in the midst of a drenching rain, but were said to have been witnessed by at least 20,000 persons. Addresses were made by Hon. Hamilton Harris and Gov. John T. Hoffman.

CHANGES IN COMMISSIONERS.—In April, 1871, the commission was so changed as to be constituted as follows: Hamilton Harris, William C. Kingsley, William A. Rice, Chauncey M. Depew, Delos De Wolf and Edwin A. Merritt. In February, 1875, Mr. Hamilton Harris, who had been chairman of the board for nearly ten years, resigned. Resident here in Albany, and from the first deeply interested in having a Capitol worthy of the Empire State, his services during the critical periods in the building's history have been of incalculable value, and after his resignation, as chairman of the finance committee of the senate at a time when a most determined opposition to any further appropriations was made by the New York city press, he again fought the battles of the Capitol through to victory. On the 21st of June, 1875, the entire old board was abolished, and the lieutenant-governor (William Dorsheimer), the canal auditor (Francis S. Thayer), and the attorney-general (Daniel Pratt), were constituted a new board. Of this board, Lieut.-Gov. Dorsheimer took an active interest in completing and furnishing the

interior, and much of its present sumptuousness, especially the assembly chamber, is due to his taste. This board was superseded by the successors to these several offices as follows: Lieut.-Gov. George G. Hoskins, from Jan. 1, 1880 to Jan. 1, 1883, when he was succeeded by Lieut.-Gov. David B. Hill; Canal Auditor George W. Schuyler from Jan. 1, 1876, to May 20, 1880, when he was succeeded by John A. Place, who held the office till it was abolished in 1883; Attorney-Generals Charles S. Fairchild, from Nov. 2, 1875, Augustus Schoonmaker, Jr., from Nov. 6, 1877; Hamilton Ward, from Nov. 4, 1879; Leslie W. Russell, from Nov. 8, 1881.

In 1883 a law was passed creating the office of Capitol commissioner, abolishing the office of superintendent of the Capitol, and empowering the single commissioner to take full charge of the work, at a yearly salary of \$7,000. This bill was signed on the 30th of March, 1883, and the same day Gov. Cleveland sent to the senate the nomination of Isaac G. Perry. He was confirmed April 5.

By act of May 23, 1885, a board of advisory commissioners was created to consist of the governor (David B. Hill), the attorney-general (Denis O'Brien), the president of the senate (Dennis McCarthy), and the speaker of the assembly (George Z. Erwin, and in succession, James W. Husted and Fremont Cole) under whose instructions the commissioner was to act. This board was superseded by the act of June 9, 1888, whereby the lieutenant-governor (Edward F. Jones), the president *pro tem.* of the senate (J. Sloat Fassett), the speaker of the assembly (Fremont Cole), and the commissioner of the Capitol (Isaac G. Perry) were appointed supervising commissioners.

CHANGES IN SUPERINTENDENTS.—In December, 1872, John Bridgford, the first superintendent, was retired, and June 11, 1873, William J. McAlpine, who from the beginning of the work had been the consulting engineer, was appointed superintendent, and remained such till May 29, 1874, when James W. Eaton was appointed in his place, and held the position till the office was abolished, as just stated.

By an act passed May 2, 1883, the governor, lieutenant-governor and speaker were constituted trustees of all the state buildings in Albany, including the finished portion of the Capitol. They appointed as superintendent of public buildings (including the Capitol) Mr. C. B. Andrews who held office till June 1, 1889, when he was succeeded by Edward K. Burnham.

CHANGES IN ARCHITECTS.—With the abolition of the old commission in 1875 came a change in architects, Mr. Thomas Fuller being superseded by an advisory board, appointed July 15, 1875, consisting of Frederick Law Olmsted, Leopold Eidlitz and Henry H. Richardson. Up to this time the exterior walls had been carried up upon the Fuller plans, a working model of which had been constructed at a cost of \$3,000. and which was on exhibition for several years. Pictures of the Capitol as it was to have been had also gone broadcast over the land and world. This plan was that of the Italian Renaissance, which was now modified to the Romanesque, but work had not proceeded far when the legislature passed

an act directing a return to the original style and that the building be carried up to the roof in accordance therewith. This has been done so far as possible, the result being what is called the Free Renaissance.

The act of May 23, 1885, made the commissioner of the Capitol (Isaac G. Perry) the sole architect thereof, with power to employ an architect for temporary service.

OCCUPIED BY THE LEGISLATURE.—The Capitol was first occupied by the legislature Jan. 7, 1879, the senate meeting on the second floor, in the room originally intended for the court of appeals, the assembly in the assembly chamber. The same evening a grand reception was given by the citizens of Albany, when 8,000 people were present. Gilmore's band, of New York, and Austin's orchestra, of Albany, furnished the music. The supper was served under a canopy in the central court.

The formal occupation took place on the evening of Feb. 12, 1879, when in presence of both houses of the legislature, the court of appeals, the state officers and others, assembled in the assembly chamber, prayer was offered by Rt. Rev. William Croswell Doane, D. D., and addresses were delivered by Lieut.-Gov. William Dorsheimer, Speaker Thomas G. Alvord and Hon. Erastus Brooks. The senate chamber was first occupied March 10, 1881. Other parts of the building have been occupied as they have been made ready for the various officers and departments.

Description.

No matter from what side you approach Albany, the building makes itself strikingly evident, rearing its heavy masses and sharp roofs into the sky from the top of the hill. The impression produced varies with various persons. One accomplished writer finds it "not unlike that made by the photographs of those gigantic structures in the northern and eastern parts of India, which are seen in full series on the walls of the South Kensington, and by their barbaric profusion of ornamentation and true magnificence of design give the stay-at-home Briton some faint inkling of the empire which has invested his queen with another and more high-sounding title. Yet when close at hand the building does not bear out this connection with Indian architecture of the grand style; it might be mere chance that at a distance there is a similarity; or it may be that the smallness of size in the decorations as compared to the structure itself explains fully why that Oriental architecture should have recurred to mind. As in the great temple enclosures of India, there is in the quadrangular scheme of the Capitol a tendency to confuse the eye by the number of projections, arches, pillars, shallow recesses, and what not, which variegates the different façades. The confusion is not entirely displeasing; it gives a sense of unstinted riches, and so far represents exactly the spirit that has reared the pile."

On the other hand, Mr. Edward A. Freeman, the English historian, was, by the general look of the city, carried so completely into another part of the world "that if anyone had come up and told me in French,

old or new, that the new Capitol was 'la chateau de Monseigneur le duc d'Albanie,' I could almost have believed him."

The situation is a most commanding one. The Capitol square, which embraces all the land between Eagle street on the east and Capitol place on the west, and between Washington avenue on the north and State street on the south, is 1,034 feet long by 330 feet wide, and contains 784-100 acres. The elevation of Capitol place is 155 feet above the level of the Hudson, and the ground falls off to the eastward 51 feet. In front, State street stretches away toward the river, one of the broadest and handsomest avenues in the country.

THE SIZE of the structure impresses the beholder at once. It is 300 feet north and south, by 390 feet east and west, and without the porticos covers 268-100 acres. The walls are 108 feet high from the water table, and all this is worked out of solid granite, brought, most of it, from Hallowell, Maine. There are other buildings which, in the mere matter of area, exceed this one. The capitol at Washington, for instance, covers a little over three and a half acres, but it is of marble and of sandstone painted white. The new city hall in Philadelphia covers nearly four and a half acres, but that is also of marble. The government buildings at Ottawa, Canada, are of sandstone. All lack the massive effect which this great pile of granite produces. Its outer wall, at the base, is 16 feet 4 inches thick. The height of the four corner pavilions is 224 feet; roof line from street 176 feet. The apex of the main tower, as now planned, 390 feet.

THE CENTRAL COURT is 137 by 92 feet, extending an open space to the sky, and admitting much needed light and air. Above the six dormer windows that open on the court, and that are above the fourth or gallery story, are sculptured the arms of six families that have become more or less distinguished in the history of the state.

The Stuyvesant arms are on the north side, west. The carving is as follows: party per fess argent and gules: in upper a hunting hound in pursuit of a hare. In lower a stag current. Crest, a demi stag issuing from a royal crown. Motto: *Jovi præstat fidere quam homini.*

The Schuyler arms are on the north side, middle. The carving is as follows: Vert a cubit arm habited issuing from the sinister base point holding a falcon proper. Crest, a falcon proper gorged with a fillet, strings reflexed.

The Livingston arms are on the north side, east. The carving is: Quarterly, first and fourth quarter argent three gilli-flowers; second quarter quarterly first and last gules a chevron argent, second and third azure three martlets; third quarter or, a bend argent between six billets. Crest, a demi Hercules with club in dexter band and the sinister strangling a serpent. Motto, *Si je puis.*

The Jay arms are on the south side, west. The carving is: argent a chevron gules, in chief a demi sun in splendor, between two mullets argent below, in base a rock proper surmounted with a large bird close. Crest, a cross calvary.

The Clinton arms are on the south side middle and are carved as follows: argent six cross crosslets fitchee, three, two, one, on a chief two mullets, pierced. Crest, a plume of six ostrich feathers on a ducal crown.

The Tompkins arms are on the south side, east. The carving is: argent on a chevron gules between three birds close, as many cross crosslets. Crest, a unicorn's head armed and maned and gorged with a chaplet laurel.

While no patriotic soul objects to giving due honor to those who have served the state, the idea of carving private arms upon a public building

has not in it the exact "elements of popularity." The carving can best be seen from the upper stories.

The first or ground story, which is nearly on a level with Washington avenue and State street, is devoted to committee rooms and offices, elsewhere specified. Ascent to the other stories may be made by elevators, but visitors will generally prefer to walk up one of the grand staircases.

THE ASSEMBLY STAIRCASE, on the north side, is of Dorchester freestone, of soft drab color; its ascent is easy, its design vigorous and scholarly. When first erected it was considered a master-piece. It was, however, faulty in construction or material, and has been the subject of costly repairs. It has since been surpassed in some respects, by the senate staircase.

THE GOLDEN CORRIDOR, reached on the second floor by the assembly staircase, was intended, by its Oriental splendor, to relieve the massive effect of so much granite; but the soft sandstone did not sustain the weight above it, and after much repairing it must take its place among the mistakes, without which no building of this magnitude was ever erected.

On the right of the corridor is the room originally intended for the court of appeals, but declined by the judges as unsuitable for their purpose. It is 60 feet square and 25 feet high, subdivided into parallelograms, one twice the width of the other, by a line of red granite columns carrying with broad low arches a marble wall. The walls are of sandstone, visible in some places but covered in most with a decoration in deep red, and with the tall wainscoting of oak, which occupies the wall above the dado of sandstone. The ceiling is a superb construction in carved oak carried on a system of beams diminishing in size from the great girders supported by great braces, and finally closed by oaken panels, profusely carved. The senate occupied this room previous to the completion of the senate chamber, and it has since been used for various purposes. When the state library building was razed, this room and the golden corridor were utilized temporarily for library purposes. It is now occupied by the second division of the court of appeals.

THE ASSEMBLY CHAMBER.—Ascending another flight of the staircase, we come to what is, without doubt, the grandest legislative hall in the world, the assembly chamber, 84 by 140 feet, including the galleries, although the chamber proper is but 84 by 55 feet. Four great pillars, four feet in diameter, of red granite, originally sustained the largest groined stone arch in the world, the key-stone being 56 feet from the floor. Of this room, as it was at first constructed, Mr. Schuyler said:

"The perspective of the room is so arranged that from the entrance one looks through the large end of the telescope, as it were, down vistas framed in arches narrowing and vaults hanging lower as they recede, from the great red pillars on either hand, along the vast and ever-varying surfaces of the ceilings, their creamy sandstone faces divided by the sweeping lines of the deeper toned ribs and arches that uphold them, and fretted with wide belts of ornament climbing their climbing courses, touched with the gleam of gold and standing out from hollows filled with deep ultra marine and burning vermilion, to the dark backward and abyss of the remotest vault. Through the lower arches one sees the openings of the windows which flood the transept, not with the dim, religious light of old cathedrals, but with naked and open

daylight. Around them, wheel the intricate arabesques of their arches defined against a ground of vermillion and encircled with bands of gold. Above and between the lower three, beneath the broad belt which is some day to carry a sculptured procession, the whole wall is covered with arabesques in a field of dull red. Above the upper arcade are glimpses of the draperies and the attitudes of colossal painted figures.

"One feels at once in this great stone room that he is in the presence of a noble monument, and that in what a musician would call the 'dispersed harmony' of this hierarchy of ordered masses, and this balance and opposition of sweeping curves there has been achieved in the America of the nineteenth century a work not unworthy to be compared with what has been done in more famous building ages. When the shock of such an impression has subsided, and he has time to examine the sources of this effect, he finds them in the general conception of the room rather than in any of its parts, or in any aggregation of them less than the whole. Here is a distinctly Gothic room, which in its plan has so many resemblances to a mediæval church that it cannot be described without using the terms of ecclesiology, which yet has probably never reminded a single visitor of a church. Its civic character has been impressed upon it by the force of design alone, and mainly by the modeling of its masses, after the noble arrangement which this modeling assists. There is a vigor in it which reminds one of Romanesque or early Gothic, but it has none of the rudeness of Romanesque vaulted architecture, and none of the tentative imperfection of early Gothic work. Except in one conspicuous instance, the structure is completely developed, and complete development is the mark of perfected Gothic. This completeness, however, nowhere degenerates into the attenuation that comes of excessive subdivision—nowhere into a loss of that sense of power which belongs to unhewn masses fulfilling structural necessities. There is nothing here of which one may say: 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.' Neither is there anything of that ascetic intensity which most of all, has set its stamp upon the ecclesiastical work of the middle ages. This work is as day-lit as Grecian Doric. It is frank and manly and it is eminently alive—distinctly a product of our time."

Unhappily this magnificent dream of the architect was almost as unsubstantial as the visions of a night. For some reason (and upon this point authorities differ) the stone ceiling soon became unsafe; the stones cracked and small pieces fell. It was feared that sooner or later the whole of it would come down with a crash.

A commission of experts reported that it was best to take the ceiling down. The architects protested, and offered to repair it at their own expense; they were allowed to do so, replaced the defective stones, and for a year or two all anxiety subsided; stones continued to fall, however, and finally, to the regret of all admirers of the superb in architecture, the stone ceiling was removed in 1888, and the present one of wood substituted.

THE ALLEGORICAL PICTURES.—No one feature of the Capitol caused more comment than the pictures that occupied the upper portion of the north and south walls of this chamber before the stone ceiling was removed. They were painted by the late William M. Hunt, one of the greatest of American artists, and possessed a melancholy interest from the fact that they were the only work of the kind he ever did. He received for his services the sum of \$15,000. One represented the Flight of Night, the other The Discoverer. The space covered by each was 15 by 45 feet. These pictures, costly and beautiful as they once were, are now hidden from sight by the wooden ceiling; but before that was substituted they had become seriously damaged and defaced by the failure of the pigments to adhere to the stone. It has been said that while Mr. Hunt was at work he obtained from his assistant a solemn promise that if their

effort proved a failure, he would paint out both pictures in a single night. Failure came at last, not an artistic failure, but a mechanical and practical failure. Mr. Hunt did not live to see it. He committed suicide on the Isles of Shoals, Sept. 8, 1879. (See *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1879; July, 1880.)

THE SOUTH SIDE CORRIDORS.—The executive chambers, or the governor's rooms, are in the southeast corner on the second or entrance floor. On the way to this portion of the Capitol one is struck by two very important differences in construction between the southern corridors and the corresponding passages on the north side of the building. These differences consist in the use of colored marbles here for wainscoting, and in the admission of light by windows rising from the top of the wainscot above the level of the eye, and surrounding the doors leading into the various committee rooms that receive direct light. The richness and variety of color is truly wonderful, and it contains in low tones more combinations than the most elaborate palettes of a painter could reach in a lifetime. The most prominent tints are shades and hues of red, and these are relieved by numberless colder tones, grays and browns predominating.

THE GOVERNOR'S ROOM is 60 feet long by 40 wide; the walls are wainscoted to a height of 15 or 16 feet with mahogany, arranged in square panels surmounted with a band of carving and a carved moulding above. The space between this and the ceiling of mahogany is covered with hangings of Spanish leather, which harmonize, in soft tones of golden brown and red and olive, with the mahogany. On one side of the room is an enormous fireplace having a shelf and several emblematic panels of elaborate carving above it. The ceiling is composed of beams, which divide the space into panels, having rails perforated in the form of a *quatrefoil* surrounding the panel. There are convenient arrangements to connect with the offices of the executive attendants and the bill room by small doors in the paneling, and altogether the room is well adapted to the reception of persons having business to transact with the governor and his assistants.

THE CORRIDOR OF COLUMNS.—Ascending from this floor by the commodious and easily running elevator, we find ourselves in a corridor similar to that previously described, which leads into a broader one, running east and west along the north side of the senate chamber. This last named corridor, which is after plans furnished by Mr. Eidlitz, is entirely lined and vaulted with sandstone, and has a row of columns in the centre, above which, there is a double arched vault extending to either wall. Upon this spacious corridor open the main doors leading to the senate chamber.

THE SENATE CHAMBER, in the richness and variety of its decoration, is equalled only by the famous St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice. Its treatment was assigned to Mr. Richardson, and of his success there can be no question. The space in which he had to work was 60 feet in breadth, nearly 100 in length, and about 50 in height. He has reduced the plan of the room to a nearly square form, cutting off from either end of it the

lobbies, above which are placed the galleries, opening on the chamber proper. These lobbies, opening from the corridors, are simple in treatment. Yet by a slight similarity in detail they, in a measure, prepare the eye for the senate chamber itself. They are wainscoted with light marble, arranged panelwise in slabs and rails, and are ceiled with quartered oak. From the west lobby opens the lieutenant-governor's room, comfortably fitted up with a carved and polished mahogany wainscot and fireplace, and an oak ceiling supported on corbels of marble. By the arrangement of the galleries over the lobbies, the actual floorspace of the senate chamber proper is reduced to about 60 feet by 55.

Entering on this floor by the main doorway from the vaulted corridor above described we first see the south wall, from which the chamber is lighted by three large openings rising from a level with the floor and six lesser openings near the ceiling. Two of the large windows are filled with disks of stained glass, which shade from browns and rubies near the floor through olives and golden hues to the semi-circular tops, which are filled with varied iridescent and opalescent tint. The central window is obscured by the reredos behind the president's desk, which rises to the spring of the window arches but does not cover the semi-circular window-head, which, like the others, is filled with many hued opalescent glass. The stained glass has been used not only to add brilliancy of color, but to avoid the glare of light that has proved so objectionable in some of the other rooms.

THE MEXICAN ONYX PANELING.—Above the three arches of the lower windows for about twelve feet (perpendicularly) the wall is paneled with Mexican onyx. These panels are cut into slabs three feet square and are separated, or rather framed, by slightly convex rails of Sienna (Italy) marble, the mottled reds, yellows and browns of which contrast with the tints of the onyx. For additional support the slabs are backed up with slabs of ordinary marble. The variety of color displayed in the onyx is very remarkable, the prevailing tints being mottled and semi-translucent whites, cream colors, sea water, olive and ivory. These tints are broken and waved by lines, striæ and splashes of raw Sienna coloring, rosy brown, and numberless shades of other neutral browns, some inclining toward red and some toward green and even blue, while the surface everywhere varies in play of light and shade of semi-opacity and translucence. The various slabs, no two of which are alike, are arranged with a certain idea of contrast, but never formally nor with regularity of counterchange.

THE GOLDEN FRIEZE.—The wall space above the windows is filled in with lead, heavily gilt, constituting a sort of frieze. The ornament of this is a carefully studied design of arabesque or floral pattern, beaten out or embossed by means of hammers, stamps and dies of various sizes and shapes, thus affording a varied play of light and shade on the gilt surface.

THE OAK CEILING.—Above the broad frieze of beaten gold and terminating the wall are the massive carved beams of oak, more than four feet in depth, which constitute the framework of the ceiling. These

great beams are supported on stone corbels sunk into the walls and projecting under the beams. The corbels are carved into bold and vigorous forms derived from foliage and flowers. The eye is easily carried to the western wall by the upper portion of wall space, which is decorated by the beaten frieze of gold. On this side again is the lower wall space of Knoxville marble. It appears, however, in greater mass than on the south side of the room, being only broken by the two doors of the lobby. Disposed in large blocks and uncarved, this marble presents an appearance of solidity and strength very necessary to a room of great size, and affords a powerful understructure for the support of the heavy columns and arches above. Although this surface is much hidden by the high-backed settees that line almost the entire wall of the room, enough shows through to give an impression of solidity and strength of construction. Above this lower wall of marble are three great arched spaces, occupying nearly the whole width of the wall and disclosing the galleries. These arches are supported by four massive columns of a dark, red-brown granite, with capitals of whitish marble, elaborately carved. The arches themselves are of the yellow Sienna marble, with both inner and outer mouldings carved. Of these arches Edward A. Freeman remarks:

"There are parts [of the building] which I cannot at all admire, but there are other parts, those in which the columns and round arches are employed, which certainly pleased me as much as any modern building that I have seen for a long time. When I say that the arches in the senate chamber seemed to me, as far as their general conception goes, worthy to stand at Ragusa, some will understand that I can say no more."

Half way between the east and west walls is the main entrance of the corridor, and on either side of the entrance are two great open fireplaces jutting out into the room. The doorway and fireplaces are constructed of marble, as is the space between them. The openings of the fireplaces are about six feet in height and something more in breadth.

THE COURT OF APPEALS.—Nine spacious rooms are assigned for the court of appeals, six in the third or principal story; three in the fourth or gallery story, the two stories being connected by an ornamented iron staircase. The court-room is in the southeast corner, over the executive chamber, and is 35 by 53 feet, and 25 feet high. It is finished in quartered red oak, timbered ceiling of the same material, with carved beams and deep recessed panels. The five window openings are finished with Knoxville marble, the arches resting upon carved trusses and columns recessed into the angles formed by the jambs and outer belting, terminating in ornamental trusses. A deep carved wood string in line with the trusses, and the carved capitals of the marble columns, divide the oak paneling on the walls into two parts. The frame work of the upper section is filled in with large plain panels, and the intention is to decorate, by gilding, the rails. The panels are designed to be painted in varied designs to harmonize with the wood carving. The lower section below the window arches stands upon a moulded base and is filled in with double raised panels and subdivided longitudinally by carved string courses, containing between them a section of vertical fluted work in

which are fixed at intervals in carved frames the portraits of the judges, many of which hung in the court of appeals room of the old Capitol.

On the west side of the room is a recessed fireplace of large dimensions, over which is displayed the arms of the state carved in the oaken panels of the mantel over the recess. The recess of the fire-place is lined with Sienna marble and has a bench on either side of the fire-place of the same material. The lintel over the fire-place is also Sienna marble richly carved and extending across the whole recess. Resting on the lintel is a large panel composed of several choice specimens of Mexican onyx skillfully arranged.

The judges' bench has been carefully designed in style and form to suit the requirements and wishes of that honorable body. The front is divided into panels set in framework; the panels are exquisitely carved in varied designs and separated by ornamental balusters, the whole resting on a moulded base. Carved in the centre panel are the arms of the state. There is a medallion convex of carved grotesque heads located along the projecting top. Perhaps no room in the building is better adapted to its purpose than this. Four other rooms adjacent form a continuous suite extending north from the court-room along the eastern front. A room for lawyers in attendance on the court of appeals is opposite the court-room on the west side.

THE SOUTHEAST OR SENATE STAIRCASE occupies a space 52 by 52, and 114 feet high from basement bottom to the top of the walls. Great care was taken in preparing and putting down the footing courses that support this grand monumental work, and which are constructed of granite blocks in two courses, cut to straight and parallel thicknesses. The blocks of granite in the lower course are from 3 to 4 feet wide, 8 feet long and 2 feet thick; in the upper course 7 feet long, 20 inches thick, well bonded with the lower course, all of which is laid and bedded in Portland cement. The foundations from the footing course up through the basement are constructed of hand-burned brick, laid and grouted in Portland cement, strengthened by broad skewbacks extending through the massive walls. The pier binders and caps are all of well wrought granite.

The stairs start on the ground floor on the south side and extend to the gallery story. The great platforms and steps are of Dorchester sandstone. Each story is divided into two sections by spacious intermediate platforms midway in each story, extending the whole distance between the north and south walls, a distance of 50 feet by 12 feet wide. The stairs are of easy ascent and grand and dignified in appearance. The upper landings of the stairs on each story are on platforms resting on the walls at either end and supported at the cross joints by massive granite girders. The west walls on the ground and entrance stories form a continuous line of niches, divided by piers and columns, embellished with moulded bases and carved caps. The west wall in each of the four stories is pierced by large openings through which light is admitted to the staircase from the court. The eastern wall in the entrance and main stories is provided with balconies, the platforms placed on a level with the tiled floors of the corridors adjoining. These balconies serve both as

useful and ornamental features, and are approached through the openings made in the east heretofore described. Each of the elevations on the east and west sides of the wall, the bases of which are on a level with the floors in the various stories and intermediate platforms, is divided into five openings by piers with columns recessed into the angles of the same, embellished with highly ornamental carved foliated caps of varied designs, in which are introduced allegorical figures of various forms, carefully studied and exquisitely executed from drawings. The openings are spanned by pointed arches, the two outer arches extending over the steps. The faces of the piers and arches are decorated by incised ornaments, the underside of arches by flowing lines of tracery terminating in grotesque heads and figures. The north and south sides of the well are each divided into two openings, which are spanned by arches springing from the massive piers at the ground floor, up to and against the piers resting upon the caps of the centre columns, from which the upper span of arches spring to and against the piers of the various landings. These arches are constructed at an angle conforming to the angles of the steps and supporting the same. The vertical faces and soffits are decorated in a similar manner as the arches heretofore described, with the exception of the lower section in which spandrels are formed, filled in with geometrical tracery.

Resting on the arches continuing up the steps and forming the coping over the same is a moulded string course, up the face of which is a deeply recessed and richly carved decoration. This coping and decoration extends along a level with all the platforms, and is divided by the piers at the angles. The coping, up the steps and along the platforms, is surmounted by a beautiful balustrade worked in geometrical figures and foliage ornaments, on which rests a heavy moulded handrail. Richly carved mouldings extend along the underside of the platforms and up the soffits of the stairs next to the outer walls. The base and wainscoting along the platforms and upon a parallel line with the stairs on the outer walls are also executed in geometrical figures, surmounted by a moulded capping. All the outer walls, from the ground floor to the underside of the skylight, are faced with sandstone ashlar, surmounted by an enriched stone cornice, on which rests the iron construction supporting the skylight. This great monumental work is believed to be without parallel on the face of the globe.

THE BUREAU OF MILITARY STATISTICS is on the fourth or gallery floor, west end, south side, and is open to visitors daily from 9 A. M. till 5 P. M. This collection grew out of a desire to perpetuate in some way the patriotic memories of the war of the rebellion. It was at first proposed to erect a suitable building for the purpose, and over \$30,000 was subscribed by towns and by individuals. This money is now on deposit, and the interest helps to support the bureau, which is under the charge of the adjutant-general.

The objects of greatest interest are the battle-flags of the various state regiments, 804 in number, some of them torn in shreds, others still bearing plainly the names of the battles in which the regiments participated.

These are in cases in the senate gallery corridor. There are 23 rebel ensigns captured from the enemy, and many other trophies to interest the curious. Over 3,000 photographs have been collected, and many are framed and on exhibition. There is also a large collection of newspapers, in which the history of the war was written in the time of it; many specimens of ordnance; some relics of the revolutionary war and of the war of 1812; an interesting collection of Lincoln memorials, including a piece of the bloody shirt taken from his person on the night of the assassination. Another interesting group is the clothes worn by Col. Ellsworth when he was shot down in Alexandria, and the rebel flag which he took from the Marshall House, an act which led to his untimely death.

THE STATE LIBRARY.—The great library of the state, with its more than 125,000 volumes, is magnificently housed in a continuous series of rooms on the third and fourth stories of the western section extending the entire length from north to south, except where occupied by the Board of Claims in the northwest pavilion, and by the Regents of the University in the southwest pavilion. There is also store room in the fifth story. The length and depth of each of these stories is about 60 by 300 feet—aggregating 42,400 square feet of floor surface, including the mezzanine floors, and with the fifth and attic story making a total of 55,600 square feet. The only entrance to the library is from the broad corridor in the third story, to the central reading or reception room, 42 by 73 feet, and two stories in height (53 feet). There are two tiers of galleries across the north and south ends of this magnificent apartment, supported by colonnades, consisting of clusters of Bay of Fundy granite columns. The ceiling is constructed of rolled wrought iron rib work, covered with iron lathe, plastered and painted soft blue in imitation of the sky, delicately tinted and shaded, forming a pleasing contrast with the soft red freestone of the colonnades below. The horizon is lighted up, and fleecy gatherings of light clouds and Cupids have been introduced. The room is of highly impressive character both on account of its size and architectural treatment.

North of the main room is the law library in five rooms on the third floor. They contain 12,500 lineal feet of quartered oak shelving. In the stock room on the fourth floor, also, a part of the law library, is 7,600 lineal feet of galvanized iron shelving, making 20,100 feet in the law department.

All the apartments in the library south of the central reading room are devoted to general literature and include six reading rooms on the third floor. On the fourth floor is one room alone which has shelving for 125,000 books. Great ingenuity has been displayed in obtaining the greatest amount of book room, and at the same time provide for light and air. For artificial light about 700 incandescent lamps will be used. Speaking tubes and electric call bells afford means of rapid communication between the employees.

THE WESTERN STAIRCASE.—Adjoining the entrance lobby on the west is located the western staircase, one of the most important of the many beautiful works of the Capitol. The first story of these stairs is erected,

which is fully equal to one-third of the whole. The plan of this monumental work is on a liberal scale. The east and west façades, as viewed from the lobby on the west and corridor on the east, are eighty-one feet in length, with seven openings on each façade. The central openings, which are the entrances to the stairway on each floor, are fourteen feet wide. All the openings will be spanned by semicircular arches. The stairs starting from the corridors and lobby on the east and west, respectively, meet at a central landing, ten by ten feet, which is located about one-third of the height of each story. From this landing the stairs lead to the north and south, and after rising another third of the height of the story, each run reaches a broad landing. From each of these landings the stairs rise again, both east and west and accomplish the remainder of the distance. This plan is repeated from the first to the fourth story. The stairs are surrounded by corridors and lobbies, which open on the stairs through arcades, from which varied and almost unlimited views of the structure will be had. The various runs and landings will be supported on arches and groined vaulted ceilings. The arches carrying the stairs are ramped ellipses of such a form as to accommodate themselves to the slopes of the stairs in a very graceful manner.

COST THUS FAR.—The following figures, taken from the books of the comptroller, show the amounts actually paid each year by the state toward the building of the Capitol, the fiscal year ending September 30:

1863.....	\$51,593 66	1877.....	\$728,220 20
1864.....	9,453 55	1878	1,075,700 00
1865.....	10,860 08	1879.....	982,836 44
1866	65,250 00	1880.....	1,008,363 56
1867.....	10,000 00	1881.....	1,350,600 00
1868... ..	50,000 00	1882	1,210,600 00
1869... ..	451,215 63	1883.....	1,289,291 57
1870.....	1,223,597 73	1884	1,306,425 30
1871.....	482,942 37	1885.... .	866,723 16
1872.....	856,106 98	1886.....	552,681 62
1873.....	1,175,600 00	1887.....	51,473 28
1874.....	610,275 16	1888.....	167,957 60
1875... ..	1,392,712 08		
1876.... .	908,487 92		\$17,888,967 89

This includes the cost of the land with the exception of what was given by the city of Albany (\$190,000). The latest estimate as to what it will cost to finish the building is three millions.

WORK YET TO BE DONE.—The important features of the work yet to be done are the eastern approach, the completion of the western staircase, and the tower. In the opinion of the present commissioners three years would be ample time in which to complete the work. The plan for the approaches and the tower is shown in the engraving. It is now proposed to complete the tower with a framed construction of rolled steel covered with copper; the friezes, string courses and ornamental caps to columns and turrets to be cast bronze.

DIRECTORY.

Rooms in the Capitol are occupied as follows:

First or Ground Floor.

NORTH SIDE—*East End.*

Superintendent of Public Buildings.
Superintendent of Public Works.
Railroad Commission.
Entrance to Assembly Staircase.
Storekeeper's Room.

West End.

Assembly Committee Rooms.
Entrance to Elevator.

SOUTH SIDE—*East End.*

Insurance Department.
Superintendent State Prisons.
Entrance to Elevator.
Entrance to Senate Staircase.

West End.

Department of Public Instruction.
State Bar Association.

Second or Entrance Floor.

NORTH SIDE—*East End.*

Secretary of State.
Assembly Staircase.
Court of Appeals—Second Division.
Dairy Commissioner.
Entrance to Elevator.

West End.

Entrance to Elevator.
Golden Corridor.

SOUTH SIDE—*East End.*

Executive Chamber.
Entrance to Elevator.
Inspector General.
Vital Statistics.
Board of Health.
Adjutant-General.
Paymaster-General.

West End.

Attorney-General.

Third or Principal Floor.

NORTH SIDE—*East End.*

Assembly Parlor.
" Document Room.
" Post-office.
" Cloak Room.
" Chamber.
Entrance to Elevator.

West End.

Assembly Clerk.
Speaker of Assembly.
Assembly Library.
Entrance to Elevator.
State Library.

SOUTH SIDE—*East End.*

Court of Appeals.
Senate Chamber.
" Clerk.
Entrance to Elevator.

West End.

Senate Cloak Room.
" Post-office.
Reporters' Cloak Room.
Senate Library.
Regents of University.

Fourth or Gallery Floor.

NORTH SIDE—*East End.*

Committee Rooms.
State Entomologist.
Assembly Gallery (Gentlemen).
Entrance to Elevator.
Commissioner Perry's Office.

West End.

Adirondack Survey.
Assembly Gallery (Ladies).
Committee Rooms.
Entrance to Elevator.
Court of Claims.

SOUTH SIDE—*East End.*

Senate Gallery (Ladies).
State Survey.
Factory Inspectors.
Committee Rooms.
Entrance to Elevator.

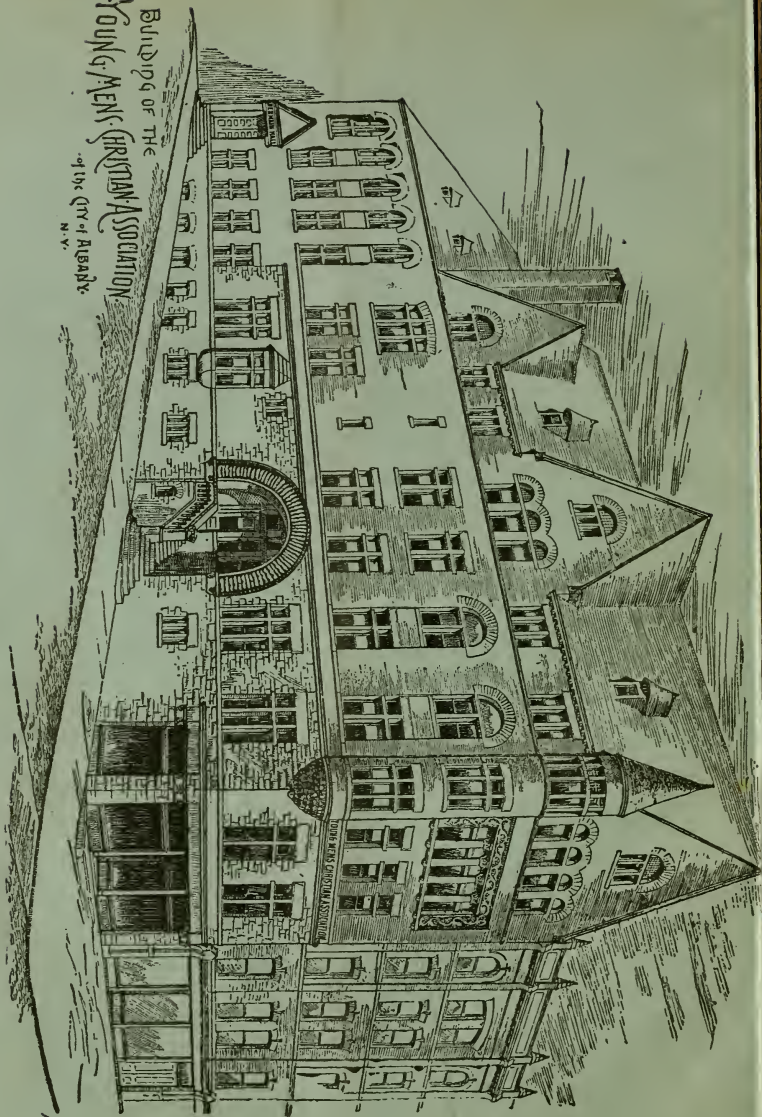
West End.

Bureau Military Statistics.
Committee Rooms.
Senate Gallery (Gentlemen).

Front.

Bureau of Labor Statistics.
Civil Service Commission.
Forest Commission.

BUILDING OF THE
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
OF THE CITY OF ALBANY
N. Y.





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 108 374 0

